

IRWA's 70TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE



On the afternoon of Sunday, June 23, 2024, attendees of the 70th Annual International Education Conference gathered at the Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center for the Opening Ceremony. Right of way professionals flowed in from all sides of the traditional theater, greeting one another warmly and gesturing excitedly to the stage, which was strikingly lit with gold and orange hues, representative of IRWA's colors. This year's theme was *Focus Forward*, a nod to the 90 years of history the Association has had toward developing infrastructure for the future while also paying homage to Los Angeles County, home to the movie industry.

And... action!

Conference Chair Artin Shaverdian, Esq., kicked off the ceremony by welcoming attendees to the sunny coastal city. He welcomed Jennifer Mizrahi, RWP, to the stage to sing the national anthem during the presentation of the flags, followed by Steve Fox, SR/WA, who gave the invocation. Lucius Martin, the deputy mayor of economic development for the City of Long Beach, then greeted attendees and gave a brief overview of Downtown Long Beach and its recent infrastructure developments.

After, Artin returned to talk about what attendees should expect at conference this year. That is, until he was disrupted by ROWdy the Right of Way Shark! The International Marketing & Membership Committee began a new tradition this year by hosting a photo scavenger hunt through the conference mobile app. The challenge was designed to unite first-time conference attendees and seasoned conference goers by snapping pictures with each other and/or ROWdy throughout the conference. After, Artin invited Chapter 1 President Alexandra Nguyen Rivera, SR/WA, along with Chapter 1's board, on stage to celebrate Chapter 1 and the Association's 90th anniversary with a beautifully decorated cake and clappers.



BY VIVIAN Q. NGUYEN



Following the celebration, International President Fred Easton, Jr., PLS, SR/WA, called the Annual Meeting of the Members to order. Fred acknowledged the 2023-2024 International Executive Committee, Advisory Council and International Governing Council. He also welcomed the Frank C. Balfour finalists, Matt Harris, SR/WA, and Raymond Mehler, SR/WA, on stage to address their peers and thank them for the distinguished recognition.

And the Lifetime Achievement Award Goes to...

International President-Elect Denise Skinner, SR/WA, presented this year's Lifetime Achievement Award to Donald Sherwood, SR/WA. A highly respected member within the Association, Donnie dedicated much of his career to right of way education in addition to making many contributions to Right of Way Magazine and being a mentor to countless individuals. Standing alongside his wife Teresa of 47 years, he thanked his family, peers and past students. "This is an outstanding honor, I certainly appreciate it," Donnie humbly expressed. "Thank you very much."

Focusing on the Big (Motion) Picture

Executive Director Tim Drennan, CAE, then took the stage to give the State of the Association Address. He had plenty of good news to share, including the fact that membership had increased for the second year in a row (4% net growth), resulting in membership income of around \$1.5 million; education had a 10.7% increase in course participants, resulting in \$1.8 million in income; and collectively, 3,072 members of IRWA had certifications and/or the SR/WA designation. In addition, Tim shared a thought he had recently while walking past the oil painting of Frank C. Balfour

at IRWA HQ again. "What would Mr. Balfour think if he were to walk in and see over 1,200 attendees at this conference? What would he think when he heard there were over 7,000 members in IRWA? Pretty sure he would be proud and impressed with how far we've come in the past 90 years," he noted. "90 years is not a small accomplishment, but I look at those years as practice. That's what got us here, and it's prepared us for where we're going to go tomorrow."

Next, Fred returned to the stage to give the International President's State of the Profession Address. He touched on how far the industry has come since the implementation of the Bipartisan Bill, noting that IRWA has felt its positive effects through the increase in education participation. Like Tim, he acknowledged how far the Association has come in and how it has influenced the right of way field. He discussed his experience at Infrastructure Week in Washington DC earlier this year and summarized the three primary talking points: 1) there needs to be sustainable funding of infrastructure development after the Bipartisan Bill, 2) the importance of improving the permitting process, primarily for the environmental sector and 3) the right of way education funding needs for professionals. He concluded by thanking everyone in the theater for their contributions in supporting infrastructure development. "Together, we can build foundations for a brighter, more connected and resilient future," Fred remarked.

After both Addresses, Artin returned to the stage and surprised the audience by sporting a Woody costume from Walt Disney Studios Pixar Movie "Toy Story." He introduced Keynote Speaker Matthew Luhn, a director, storytelling consultant and speaker whose work has been seen in many famous Pixar animations. Matthew's inspirational words kept the audience enraptured throughout and set the stage for the rest of the promising week of events.



AWARDS CEREMONY



This year, there were a total of 80 individuals between May 1, 2023, and April 30, 2024, who received their prestigious SR/WA designation. The recipients proudly crossed the stage to shake hands with members of the International Education Committee and completed their walk by taking a picture with International President Fred Easton, Jr., PLS, SR/WA.

The Awards Ceremony continued with Emcee Rachel Sheerin keeping the energy high with her charismatic quips. She then invited International Nominations & Elections Chair Kris Koehler, RWP-GN, to present the first awards. "This ceremony is an opportunity to recognize the effort and passion that our members bring to the Association," Kris reflected. He then congratulated all the finalists for being nominated for an award.

The enthusiasm and support in the ballroom that day was palpable. The crowd cheered and applauded for their peers as they took the stage to accept their awards. The pride that was felt by everyone was undeniable.

International President-Elect Denise Skinner, SR/WA, presented the Ronald Jourdan SR/WA Advancement Award this year. Bestowed upon an IRWA member who has demonstrated long-term commitment to advancing lifelong learning among right of way

professionals, this year's recipient was Past President Faith Roland, SR/WA. Faith shared that she took her SR/WA study session from Ron Jourdan and credited him with being instrumental to her professional education within the Association. She also challenged everyone in the room to print out an IRWA member application, write "You will benefit from this Association," on a sticky note and stick it on top of the printed application before handing it to a peer. She explained that her colleague had done this for her many years ago, and that was the very reason why she was standing there today; she asked that everyone continue to pass on this tradition so the Association could continue for another 90 years.

Next, Advisory Council Liaison Pat Petitto, SR/WA, presented the Dan Beardsley Memorial IRWA Builder Award. After sharing some fond memories of the impact the recipient had made to so many members, including herself, throughout his 35 years with the Association, she announced the winner as Francis Vicente, IRWA HQ's credentialing manager. Shocked and touched by the recognition, Francis shared a warm hug with Pat before addressing the crowd. "I don't know what to say — thank you so much," he said, offering a smile.

This year, the highest honor, the Frank C. Balfour Professional of the Year award was presented to Matt Harris, SR/WA. "This is truly an honor. Me standing here says this is something any one of you can achieve," Matt remarked. "For me, service is what I do," he went on to share the joy he feels when he can help someone. "I can't describe the euphoria I feel — to see the gleam in their eyes and the smile on their face. So, to everyone who has helped me along the way, in spite of who I am, thank you kindly."



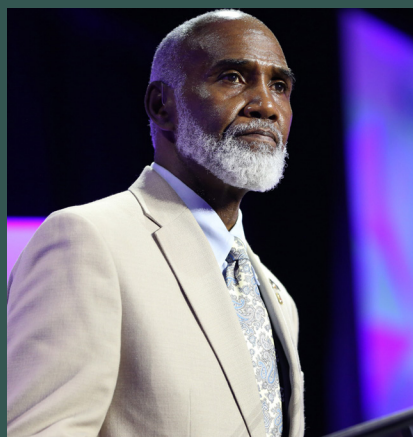
The winner of the Ronald Jourdan, SR/WA Advancement Award was Faith Roland, SR/WA.



Conner McDonald, SR/WA, was presented with the W. Howard Armstrong Instructor of the Year award.



The winner of the Alan D. Wurtz, SR/WA Scholarship Fund was Jennifer Schwartz.



The Frank C. Balfour Professional of the Year Award was presented to Matt Harris, SR/WA, R/W-RAC.



Francis Vicente received the Dan Beardsley Memorial IRWA Builder Award.



The recipient of the SARPA Scholarship this year was Jason Ferola.



Road Commission for Oakland County was named Employer of the Year, Government Employer.



Employer of the Year with 20 employees or more was presented to CBRE.



Employer of the Year with Less than 20 Employees was presented to DOWL.



The Chapter of the Year Winner was Dakotas Chapter 72, Region 3.



Newsletter of the Year was awarded to "Indiana," Chapter 10, Region 5.



Alyssia Padilla, SR/WA-GN, received the Young Professional of the Year award.



Julie McDonald, SR/WA-EU, was presented with the Louise L. & Y.T. Lum Award.



Sierra Nevada Chapter 46 accepted the Gene L. Land Award for the Highest Percentage Gain.



North Texas Chapter 36 accepted the Gene L. Land Award for the Highest Numerical Gain.



The recipient of the CRWEF Scholarship this year was Joseph Martinez.



Social Media Presence of the Year award went to Crossroads of America, Chapter 10, Region 5.



The recipient of the Website of Year award went to Crossroads of America, Chapter 10, Region 5.

MONDAY NIGHT EVENT

The Monday Night Event made a splash at this year's conference! Hosted at the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, attendees were oh-*fish*-ally greeted with drinks and a touch tank filled with mesmerizing (and harmless!) moon jellies. The crowd made their way through the countless exhibits filled with everything from surgeonfish to frogs and harbor seals, they found their way to the main floor, where a *fin*-tastic live band provided soulful tunes to set the tone for the memorable night. Many attendees chose to grab a plate of food from the delicious buffet and sit at tables beneath the impressive whale that was suspended from the ceiling, while others wandered deeper into the aquarium and found a cozy corner to sit with friends and family while enjoying in the diverse sea life.

Later that night, the live auction was held, and the tradition of the iconic International President puppet auction continued this year with Fred Easton, Jr., PLS, SR/WA. By the end of the night, with a total of over 1,036 tickets sold at the Monday Night Event, the Right of Way International Education Foundation raised net proceeds of \$44,500 for right of way education.

The Foundation wishes to thank IRWA's International Advisory Council; CBRE; Centerpoint Energy; IRWA Chapters 3, 4, 8, 10, 14, 31, 32, 36, 39 & 45; CLS Family of Companies; Croft and Associates LLC; Cushman Wakefield Appraisers; Diversified Property Services; ERM; Halo Land Management; Hayes Consulting Services LLC; HDR, Inc.; National ROW Review Appraisal; Negotiations Inc; NuStar Foundation; IRWA's International Pipeline Committee; Portland Valuation Group; Pyles Whatley Real Estate Services; IRWA Regions 2, 4 & 5; RWIEF Trustees; Schneider Geomatics; Tidemark Land Services; TranSystems; Universal Field Services; WSP; Yasmin L. Stump Law Group, PC.





FOCUS FORWARD





BOD



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

International President Fred Easton, Jr., PLS, SR/WA called the annual Board of Directors meeting to order on Wednesday, June 26, 2024. After the minutes of the previous annual meeting in Denver were approved, Fred recessed the meeting to invite the Education Foundations to the podium to give their updates.

Education Foundations



Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) President Leslie Finnigan, SR/WA, shared plenty of good news and thanked everyone for their support in making the Monday Night Event and annual Golf Tournament huge successes. She went on to speak about their scholarships, congratulating the Region Professionals of the Year and the "Carol A. Croft Finish Line Scholarship" recipients; she also announced a new scholarship entitled "The Global Education Initiative Scholarship," which is the same scholarship as the past "Leaders Light the Way Scholarship," with an essential change that now allows all Chapters in the Association, including international Chapters, to participate.

In addition, she also took the time to acknowledge Bernard Lea, SR/WA, who was stepping down after dedicating 24 years to the Foundation. "Bernie, we'll miss you, thank you for all of your service," she remarked. "We will hope to see you at the conferences, and we will always have a chair for you with the trustees."

Leslie then invited those who requested the opportunity to donate to RWIEF to step forward and do so. "To give back to the Foundation is so tremendous, so thank you all," Leslie said after the last donation was made. "Thank you to all the members for being here and supporting us. We will do the best we can to support you, always."



Next, Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation (CRWEF) President Nancy Sinclair, SR/WA, took the stage to share her Foundation's business. She thanked everyone for coming out to support the Canadian Hospitality Suite the night before and acknowledged all the assistance the CRWEF Board, IRWA HQ and the International Professional Education Committee has given the Foundation throughout the year. She discussed two scholarships: one international scholarship available to high school students who plan to pursue a career in the right of way industry and another member-based scholarship that was available to Canadian Chapters. Members then had the opportunity to donate to CRWEF in support of right of way education, and many were generous with their contributions. "A heartfelt thank you to all of you," Nancy said. "Your support means the world to us. With it, we are able to support our members and do our very best to get the education our folks need."



The Board of Directors meeting then resumed with Fred inviting Conference Chair Artin Shaverdian, Esq., to the stage to accept a check on behalf of Chapter 1 for hosting the 2024 conference. Artin extended a thank you to IRWA for allowing the Chapter to host a memorable conference which allowed them to celebrate their 90th anniversary with the Association.

After, General Counsel Dave Arnold, Esq., SR/WA, presented the resolutions. Three were offered this year, which were all passed: Board Resolution 2024-01; Board Resolution 2024-02; and Board Resolution 2024-03 (more information on these resolutions can be found on irwaonline.org on the Board of Directors 2024 page).

The Chapters bidding to host the 2027 and/or 2028 conferences then had their opportunity to promote their cities to the Board. Though all of the presentations were a hit, the final winning cities were Calgary, Alberta, for hosting the 2027 IRWA Conference and Detroit, Michigan, for hosting the 2028 IRWA Conference.

International Nominations and Elections Committee Chair Kris Koehler, RWP-GN, then presented the nominations for the International Executive Committee. Koby Godwin, SR/WA, Dan Bucan, SR/WA, and Cyndi Whelpley, SR/WA, were up for reelection and were confirmed. Matt Harris, SR/WA, joined the IEC as International Secretary. Dave Arnold was thanked for his four years of service, and Yasmin Stump, Esq., was welcomed into the position as the 2024-2025 General Counsel and Parliamentarian.

International Secretary Cyndi Whelpley, SR/WA, then presented the 2024-2025 International Region Officers, while President-Elect Denise Skinner, SR/WA, announced the 2024-2025 leadership appointments.

A Focus Forward



As incoming International President, Denise then had the opportunity to give members some insight into her future plans. She began by thanking everyone for the confidence and trust they've placed in her to lead the Association, stating it was a truly humbling experience to be chosen, given the talent and abilities of the professionals in the room.

Denise spoke of her goal to update the Strategic Plan: "It is a living, breathing document that will grow and change as we grow and change," she explained. "Even though we have had so many successes, our work is just beginning." She continued by sharing the importance of growing IRWA's reach by strengthening the Association's relationships with federal and local agencies as well as Provincial governments in Canada. She also emphasized the importance developing webinars and online courses that have State and Provincial licensing agencies approval in mind.

"There are other conversations happening around leadership development and how to increase member benefits," Denise remarked. "The end goal [is to keep] the Association moving in a forward direction, while maintaining and increasing member benefits and engagement."

She concluded by thanking everyone again for their participation and support. "Because of you — the best is yet to come!"



EXHIBIT HALL

1. Associated Right of Way Services
2. Aurigo Software
3. BEM Systems, Inc.
4. Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation
5. Chapter 1: Conference Host
6. City of Long Beach
7. Clark Land Resources
8. CLS Family of Companies
9. Coates Field Service, Inc.
10. CoreLogic
11. Doyle Land Services
12. Emerald Energy & Exploration Land Company
13. Farnsworth Group
14. Federal Highway Administration
15. Fidelity National Title
16. Flairdocs
17. Halo Land Management
18. Integra Realty Resources
19. International Professional Education Committee
20. International Right of Way Association
21. International Young Professionals Committee
22. Interwest Consulting
23. IRTH
24. JLL
25. LandSolutions



With hundreds of attendees, the Exhibit Hall served as an ideal venue for exhibitors to showcase their products and services to the dedicated right of way professionals in attendance. This was an excellent networking opportunity for many, and participants were excited to see familiar faces once again as they wandered through the rows of innovative and colorful booths.



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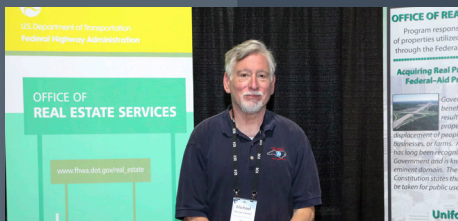
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[THIRTEEN]



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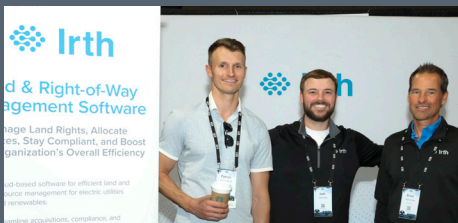
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[TWENTY-FIVE]

EXHIBIT HALL

26. Monument
27. Nossman LLP
28. OpenGov
29. Pandell
30. Peloton
31. RailPros
32. Rincon Consultants
33. Right of Way International Education Foundation
34. Synergy Land
35. TranSystems
36. TRC Companies, Inc.
37. Turnkey Logistics
38. Universal Field Services, Inc.
39. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
40. Valbridge Property Advisors
41. Valcre
42. Verdanterra, LLC
43. Western Land Services
44. Whitestar
45. WSB
46. 2027/2028 Conference Bidder: Calgary
47. 2027/2028 Conference Bidder: Detroit
48. 2027/2028 Conference Bidder: Las Vegas
49. 2027/2028 Conference Bidder: Sacramento
50. 2025 Conference Host: Virginia Beach



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[TWENTY-SEVEN]



[THIRTY-ONE]



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[FORTY-TWO]



[46]



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[28]



[29]



[THIRTY]



[THIRTY-THREE]



[34]



[35]



[36]



[39]



[FORTY]



[43]



[FOURTY-FOUR]



[46]



[FOURTY-EIGHT]



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COMMITTEES, COUNCILS AND REGIONS



The Annual Conference provides a unique opportunity for members to discuss topics, relevant industry changes, trends and upcoming educational initiatives. The International Industry Committees focused on issues impacting the core segments associated with the right of way profession, while the International Service Committees discussed key initiatives that would help move the Association forward.

IRWA is also guided and supported by the leadership of its various councils. The International Governing Council (IGC) represents each of the 10 Regions working in conjunction with the International Executive Committee and Headquarters staff. The Advisory Council is comprised of past International Presidents. Also pictured is the Right of Way International Education Foundation and Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation, both of which support right of way education.





FOCUSFORWARD





YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

SATURDAY NIGHT EVENT



The Young Professionals Annual Casino Night at the 70th Annual Education Conference in Long Beach, California, was, as always, an evening to remember! As the outgoing Committee Chair, I am thrilled to share the highlights of this annual event, which brings together our vibrant community of professionals for a night of networking and fun as we welcome our industry colleagues from near and far.

The Casino Night was a resounding success, as guests were treated to an evening of competition, laughter and networking with peers and mentors across the industry; a great way to start the annual education conference. The event featured a lively atmosphere with classic casino games such as poker, blackjack and roulette.

A significant evening highlight was the Committee's exciting raffle, where we proudly gave away three free association memberships (two of which sponsored by Chapter 14) and one conference registration. These prizes served as a gesture of appreciation for our dedicated supporters. We look forward to displaying the winners, who will receive these valuable opportunities to further their professional development and engagement with the IRWA community, on our LinkedIn profile (@IRWA Young Professionals).

We owe a tremendous gratitude to our generous sponsors, whose support made this event possible. Their contributions were instrumental in creating a memorable experience for all attendees. A special note of appreciation goes to our top sponsor, HDR, whose unwavering support and commitment to the Young Professionals have been invaluable. HDR's sponsorship was highlighted throughout the night with our custom funny money, and we are deeply grateful for their partnership.



It's official!

IRWA Chapter 52 is excited to welcome you to **Virginia Beach, Virginia**, for the **71st Annual International Education Conference**.

June 1-4, 2025



FEDERAL AGENCY UPDATE

Plenary Session: Federal Agency Update

This year, the Federal Agency Update returned as the Plenary Session. IRWA invited a panel of representatives from the U.S. Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to present key changes from The Uniform Act's final rule, which was published in May. The presentation was followed by a Q&A session. To read more about the final rule, check out our July/August issue, which features an interview with FHWA on the subject.



GOLF TOURNAMENT



In conjunction with the 70th Annual International Education Conference in Long Beach, the Right of Way International Education Foundation (RWIEF) and the Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation (CRWEF) hosted their 28th Annual Golf Tournament. The Pacific Coast Classic was held on June 25, 2024, at El Dorado Park Golf Course, giving conference attendees and golf enthusiasts a day outdoors for networking and an opportunity to raise funds for a worthy cause. Just over 100 golfers enjoyed a beautiful day on the links. Prizes were awarded for the top three finishing teams, closest-to-the-pin on the Par 3 holes, and men's and women's long drives. A catered lunch and a raffle concluded the event. In total, the event successfully raised approximately \$13,000 for right of way education.

The Foundations would like to thank the participants, as well as the generous sponsors. Special thanks to **Platinum Sponsors:** Allen, Williford & Seale, Croft & Associates, Percheron, IRWA's International Pipeline Committee, IRWA Chapter 8, IRWA Region 3 and IRWA Region 5; **Diamond Sponsors:** Coates Field Services, Inc.; **Gold Sponsors:** Liberty Core Consultants, RWIEF Trustees; **Silver Sponsors:** Halo Land Management, Pattison & Associates, Inc., IRWA Region 7; **Bronze Sponsor:** IRWA Chapter 22.



What's black and chrome, crisscrosses the United States and Canada, and raises money for right of way education? Steve Grandon's awesome Harley, of course!

In 2014, Steve thought of ways to combine two things he enjoys, the IRWA and motorcycles, so he decided to ride from the annual conference in Hartford, Connecticut, to the site of the 2015 Conference in San Diego, California. By riding from our current conference site to next year's conference site, he created a contest to guess his total trip mileage. Voila! The Ride for the Foundation FUNdraiser was born.

For a \$10 donation per guess, anyone can enter possible mileage for the ride. To say Steve puts a lot of energy into this contest is an understatement. To date, his shortest ride was from Minneapolis to San Antonio in 2020 at a distance of 1,478.5 miles, and his longest ride was from Nashville to Anchorage in 2016 at a distance of 4,378.7 miles. That is dedication (and saddle sores) for sure! Steve's employer, Liberty Core Consultants, sponsors this event and provides a \$1,000 cash prize to the winner!

This year's ride was from Long Beach, California, to Virginia Beach, Virginia. Mileage guesses were collected at the Long Beach conference and the winner was announced during RWIEF's fundraising event, Monday Night at Aquarium of the Pacific. Steve raised \$700 this year for ROW education! This year's contest winner was Stephen Sprague, SR/WA (self-employed). The actual number of miles ridden was 2923.9, and Stephen's name was drawn from a hat, which included all participants that had chosen the correct mileage out of the three "total mileage" options that were available.

RIDE FOR THE FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER





THE CANADIAN HOSPITALITY SUITE

It was another epic Tuesday night at the Canadian Hospitality Suite with over 500 right of way professionals enjoying the tastes and tonics of Café Sevilla while celebrating the opportunity to network with colleagues, establish new connections and visit with old friends!

Our incredible bands are always a highlight of the event, and “The Trip” put on a performance that did not disappoint! Playing a plethora of anthems and classic songs spanning several decades, they kept the dancefloor full and even put on an encore performance to wrap up an incredible night in the theater at Café Sevilla.

Your support was appreciated as we transitioned to a new format this year, and we look forward to continued growth of the Canadian Hospitality Suite – none of which would be possible without our dedicated sponsors, many of whom who have maintained their commitment since its rebranding in 2011.

Thank you to the following sponsors: **Platinum:** Plains Mainstream; **Gold:** Aim Land; Hydro One; **Silver:** Canacre; Canada West Land; CRVG; Challenger Geomatics; IRWA Chapters 29, 48, 54 and 62; D.A. Grigg; Evolve Surface Strategies; Flairdocs; LandSolutions; Midwest Surveys; Progress Land; IRWA Region 10; Scott Land & Lease; Synergy Land; Table Rock Energy; Vertex.

We would like to sincerely thank all who came out for the event and with your support, over \$7,000 was able to be raised and donated to the Canadian Right of Way Education Foundation. Virginia Beach is on the horizon, and we look forward to you joining us again in 2025!



CLOSING



GALA

The highly anticipated Closing Gala was the perfect way to end the successful 70th Annual International Education Conference in Long Beach. Held in a traditional grand ballroom at the Hyatt Regency, the venue was the perfect glamorous backdrop for what promised to be a sentimental and unforgettable night.

Fred Easton, Jr., PLS, SR/WA, was welcomed on stage to give his final speech. He reminisced about his leadership experience and acknowledged the extraordinary individuals who had taken the time to mentor him along the way. After charming the crowd with a few funny anecdotal memories, he concluded by thanking everyone. "I love you all and appreciate all the support and work we've done this year. Thank you so much." The poignant moment was only made more profound by the audience giving Fred a proper send-off with a standing ovation, and it was clear by the immense gratitude reflected on his face that he would remember this scene forever.

Fred then invited Past President Faith Roland, SR/WA, to swear in the 2024-2025 Region Officers. The Region chairs and vice chairs, dressed for the dazzling occasion, stepped on the dance floor and faced the crowd as Faith gave her words of encouragement and officially swore them into their positions.

Next, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Communications & Events Jade Meador, CAE, was invited to the stage to present Denise Skinner, SR/WA, with the International President's pin. Denise presented Fred with his President's plaque and invited his wife Heather to the stage to present him with his Past International President's pin. The two exited the stage. Fred gave a final wave to the audience and exited with Heather, officially handing the reins to Denise as the 2024-2025 International President.

"I don't think it's been said enough," Denise began, smiling. "What we do as an Association is only possible because of the contributions each and every one of you makes." She continued by stating that one of the true treasures of IRWA is its people, and how special it is that the Association is made up of individuals who are always willing to lend their support or advice.

"As leaders of this Association, we need to be identifying [those who] are coming up and finding out: do they need a gentle nudge? Do they need to be pushed off the ledge into this wonderful world we know as IRWA and leadership?" Denise concluded by thanking everyone for their support.

Following Denise's empowering words, 2025 Conference Co-Chair Carrilin Hirsch, SR/WA, took the stage to deliver a witty speech, inviting everyone to Virginia Beach next year to enjoy the sun, sand and surf.

The night ended with the Spazmatics bringing the house down with their '80s jams, keeping attendees on the dancefloor all through the night. *And that's a wrap!*





CONFERENCE SPONSORS

In Appreciation

IRWA is pleased to give special recognition to our sponsors for their generosity in making this year's conference a success.

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